



ecoAmerica
start with people

Let's Talk Communities & Climate

Contra Costa County Sustainability Exchange

November 8, 2018

Today's Presentation

1. Context
2. Communication Guidance
3. Crafting a Message in Action!
4. Try It Yourself!

Today's Presenter



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ecoAmerica

Build a critical mass of institutional leadership, public support, and political will for definitive climate solutions in the United States.

- Visible Institutional Leadership
- Climate Literate Leaders + Staff
- Engaged Communities
- Support Mitigation and Advocacy



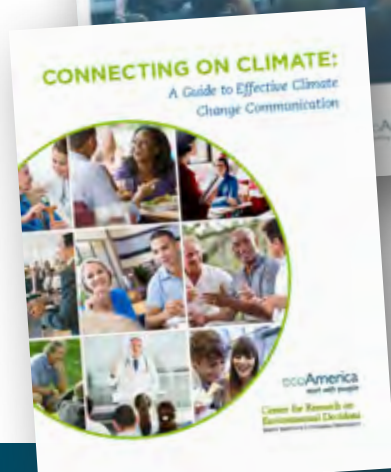
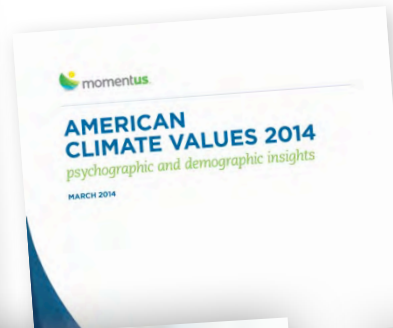


Offerings

- Communications & talking points
- Program leaders & partners
- Resources to reduce impact
- Tools to engage others
- Research & guides
- Summits & forums
- News, events & blogs

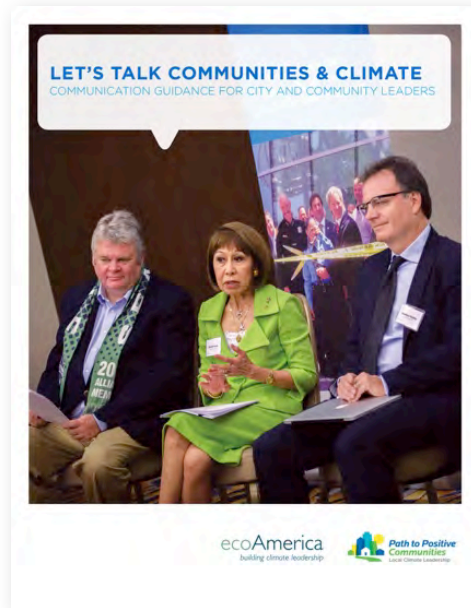


Research



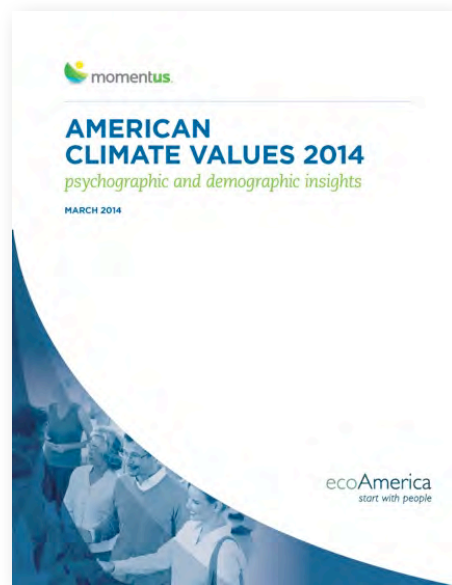
Rigorously Tested Recommendations

1. Synthesis of latest communities and climate communications research
2. Rigorously tested words, phrases, and messages, proven to shift motivations
3. Useful guidance with examples



American Climate Values

1. Benefits are essential for climate action
2. Americans follow tribes, are afraid to stray
3. Not ready to abandon the American dream
4. My family first
5. Competing priorities
6. Preparedness can motivate climate action





Five recent events stoking climate change fears

BY [MIRANDA GREEN](#) - 08/25/18 06:30



1) Arctic's thickest ice layer breaks for first time on record

The oldest sea ice in the Arctic Ocean, in the most northern parts of the planet, began breaking up this summer for the first time in recorded history...

2) Longer fire seasons contribute to historic forest fires

U.S. Forest Service calls “longer fire seasons; bigger fires and more acres burned on average each year; more extreme fire behavior” the new “norm.”

3) Hurricanes hit with more frequency and intensity

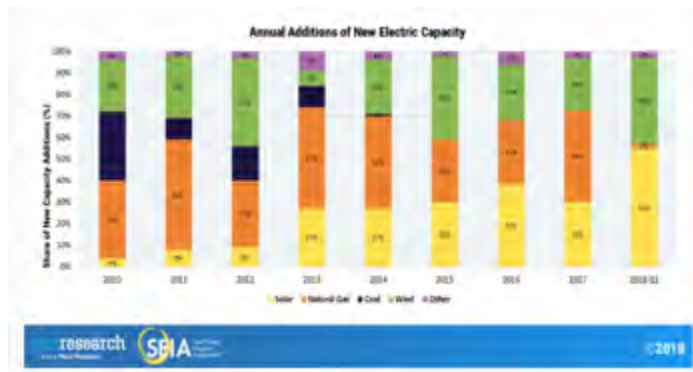
Over the past year, three historic hurricanes -- Harvey, Irma and Maria -- made landfall in the U.S., leading to billions of dollars of damage and 1,427 deaths in Puerto Rico alone.

4) Heat waves paralyze cities worldwide with record temps

Major cities across the globe in June experienced some of the warmest temperatures in recorded history. Montreal, Glasgow and Shanghai were all hit with record highs.

5) Toxic algae blooms close down beaches in Florida The increase in toxic algae -- also known as red tide -- has made ocean conditions harmful to humans, while killing thousands of fish.

Climate Solutions



- New Global PV **+50% in 2017**, #1 source
- Wind and solar reach **10% of US electricity**
- **75,000 new solar panels** installed daily in U.S.
- US wind capacity now powers **25mm+ US homes**
- 58 U.S. cites, including Orlando, Sarasota, and St. Petersburg pledged to 100% clean energy
- 2x U.S. renewables will **add half a million jobs**
- Countries phasing out petrol cars
 - China, India, France, UK, Norway, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Japan, Portugal, Korea and Spain
- By 2025, all new **mass market cars will be electric**
- **California keeping gas tax**



Awareness + Concern

AWARENESS

- 81% notice more severe weather
- 80% believe that climate change is happening
- 60% believe that the effects of climate change have already begun

CAUSATION

- 53% both human activities and natural causes
- 23% attribute climate change to human activities
- 16% attribute climate change to natural causes

CONCERN

- 73% are concerned about climate change
- 57% believe others around them are concerned about climate change

American Climate Metrics Survey. 2018. ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners.

Attitudes

National (%)

Americans expect their leaders to act on climate

Believe the government needs to protect all people from the impacts of climate change	74
Believe communities need to prepare for floods and droughts to minimize their impact	85

Support an array of local climate policies and programs

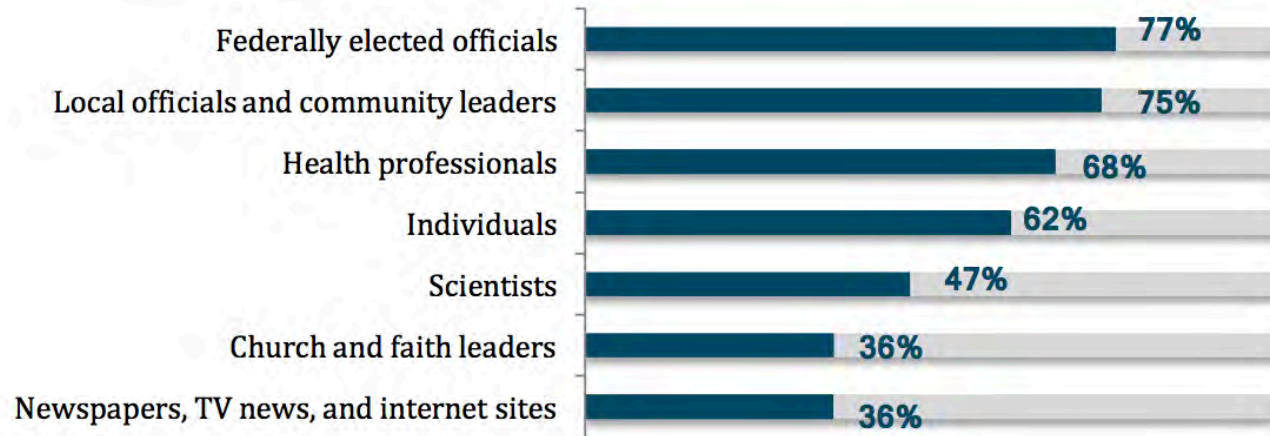
Believe the U.S. should produce more wind and solar energy	89
Favor modernizing America's electric grid	87
Believe everyone has a right to clean energy that does not pollute the air or water	84
Favor charging large companies a fee for the pollution they create	83
Favor laws for more efficient buildings	81
Expanding public transit	80

American Climate Metrics Survey. 2018. ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners.

Local Climate Preparedness

**Whose responsibility is it to prepare for extreme weather events and climate change?
Please rank who you believe is most responsible to least responsible.**

860 respondent(s) total nationally, % Total top 3 ranked choice

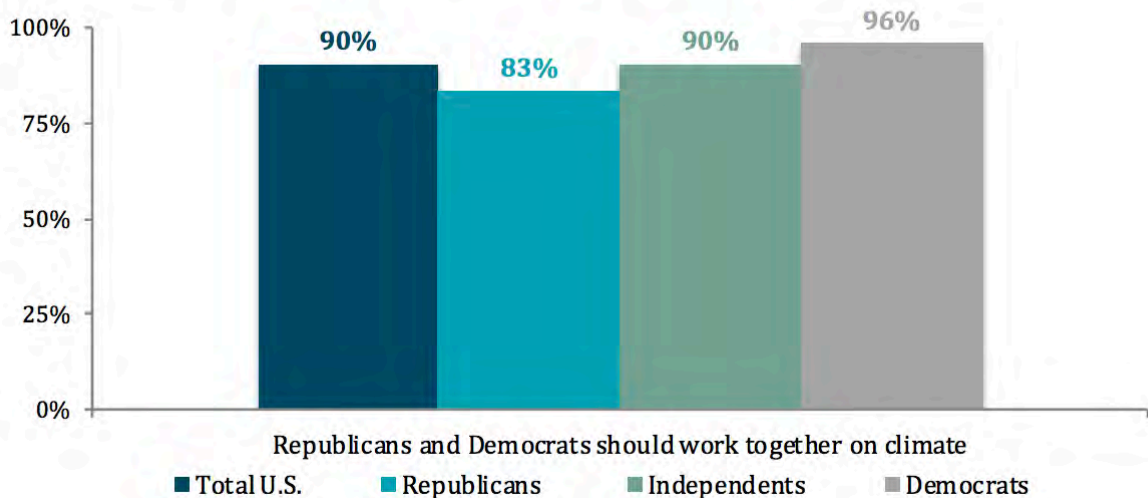


American Climate Perspectives Survey. August 2018. ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners.

Common Ground

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree: Republicans and Democrats should find a way to work together to address climate change.

849 respondent(s) total nationally, % Total "Strongly agree and Somewhat agree"



American Climate Perspectives Survey. September 2018. ecoAmerica.



Communication Guidance



Writing a letter to an editor



Giving a speech



Informal conversation



Talking with elected officials

Message Evolution

<'08

Armageddon

Global Warming



'08

Social Benefits

Opportunity



>'13

Personal Relevance

Family and Health





Personal Relevance

SALIENCE, CLIMATE IMPACTS: With your own eyes. Link to daily/local lives.

UNAMBIGUOUS SOLUTIONS: Proven solutions that solve the problem and benefit the economy, our health and our security.

AGENCY, EMPOWERMENT: You, your community, company, and nation can act.

MORAL IMPERATIVE: Responsibility to our children, families, and communities.

Successful Tested Message

“We all want to live in the best place for our **families**. And communities across America are learning that smart investments in sustainable energy like wind and solar provide a **healthier environment, attract new business, create jobs, and build stronger communities**. We see climate change, and we can’t just wait for politicians in Washington to solve our problems. Right now, in our own communities, **we can** reduce pollution, improve our health, and create new jobs that can’t be outsourced, by producing and using clean energy. **We can** protect our cities by leaving dirty fuels behind. A community with sustainable solutions is the place **I want to call home.**”

REPLACE

EMBRACE

BECAUSE

Climate change,
climate crisis, global
warming

**Damage to the
climate**

“Damage” implies human causation, which can be prevented or protected against. Other terms are too politically polarizing.

The planet, polar
bears

**Families, our
children, and future
generations**

Referencing future generations and families has high emotional resonance, moves thinking beyond oneself, builds inclusiveness (not everyone has children), and activates collective agency.

Economy

**Good for [city or
state], good for
people**

Americans are more personally attuned to their local communities and personal well-being these days. They are less satisfied with how things are going in our country and thus do not respond as strongly to “good for the country” messages.

Build resilient
communities

**Build stronger
communities**

The term “resilient” is not a readily understood term for many Americans, feels defensive, and creates mixed feelings. Americans prefer to live in “stronger communities,” a phrase that feels more empowered and inspired.

Renewable energy

Wind and solar

“Wind” and “solar” are more straightforward, visual, and understandable to Americans.

Key Talking Points

KEY TALKING POINTS...

You can make a difference in your community regarding climate. The following talking points provide a starting point. Tailor and use them in your conversations, speeches, and writing to build support for climate solutions.

1. **I care about climate change because acting for the well-being of everyone in our community is my responsibility.** I serve our citizens, and I work to make our community a better place to live in.
2. **Climate change is already affecting our community.** Severe weather events, droughts, community health impacts, and increased energy bills threaten our community. This is why we must act. (This statement can be specifically tailored to climate impacts seen locally.)
3. **The greatest action on climate begins with us.** We have the power to make a difference that will benefit our environment, our economy, and our community.
4. **It is up to me and my fellow respected community leaders to lead on climate.** We need to ensure that the families, residents, and businesses in our communities are prepared for and understand our need to act on climate.
5. **Some groups in our city are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change,** including children, the elderly, the sick and poor, and disadvantaged communities. Our efforts to stop climate-related pollution help all of these groups live better, healthier lives.
6. **When we reduce fossil-fuel pollution, it improves the health and security of our community.** We can slow the rising temperatures that are changing weather patterns and causing more intense storms and heat waves, which in turn affect food and energy prices, as well as threaten our city infrastructure and the health and safety of our families.
7. **Our community is blessed with determined and qualified leaders who want to lead on climate.** Faith, higher education, business, health, and commerce leaders must and have begun to collaborate on community-based climate solutions.
8. **Investing in climate solutions means investing in our community.** By taking action, we can be prepared for climate impacts, enhance our community, create good local jobs, and make our neighborhoods more attractive places to live in.

& COUNTERPOINTS ON COMMUNITIES & CLIMATE

1. **"Climate change does not affect me."**
Climate change affects us all. Changing temperatures make heating and cooling our homes more expensive, and they make a bigger dent in our budgets. Rising sea levels threaten our coastlines. Severe weather events pose a risk to our homes, our community's infrastructure, and our mass transit and energy systems. Changing climate patterns affect our health in many ways, including increasing respiratory problems, such as asthma and the severity of allergies. (This statement can be specifically tailored to climate impacts seen locally.)
2. **"There is nothing I can do to stop climate change."**
Taking action on climate is something that we can all do together. No one expects any one person to solve this—it is a community problem that requires a collective, community-wide response. In our communities, we can push for clean energy, such as wind and solar power. We can implement energy-efficiency standards, enhance mass transit systems, reduce waste, and optimize water use. We can even make landscaping choices to help reverse the damage to the climate. We can all act at home. Walking to work, changing thermostat settings, recycling, and being conscious about reducing energy consumption and emissions can go a long way. Together and as individuals, we can make a significant difference and be a part of the solution.
3. **"I am more concerned about my (family, health, job) right now."**
We all have multiple pressing concerns that compete for our attention. Family, health, and work are all reasons why we must be concerned about a changing climate. We must address climate change because we care about clean air, clean water, and safe communities to live in. Caring for our climate is caring for ourselves, our family, and our community.
4. **"Why should we lead when other (cities, states, countries) are not?"**
The United States has always been a yes-we-can kind of place. We have skilled workers, cutting-edge innovators, and an unparalleled work ethic. Other cities and countries are already investing in clean technologies, but we can and must lead the way. The next gold standard will be clean energy—affordable, local wind and solar power made here in our communities. In fact, cities and states across the nation—from California to Texas, Iowa, Tennessee, and beyond—have significantly increased their clean-power production. The United States has more than doubled its supply of solar energy. Our country has solved great challenges before, and we can lead again with innovations that fuel cleaner, safer, and healthier communities for our families, as well as stable, well-paying jobs for us all.
5. **"How do we know that humans are causing climate change?"**
Although some Americans are unsure about the extent to which the climate is changing, and others doubt how much humans are to blame, we can all agree that we can do something to make our community stronger and more prosperous. Solutions are available right here, right now, and they strengthen our community, create jobs, and help reduce our climate impact at the same time. Investments in wind and solar energy, mass transit, and building efficiency can create jobs, improve living conditions for our families, and boost our economy. Humans may or may not be the sole cause of changes to our climate, but they can certainly be the solution.

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a black and white striped cardigan, is pointing with a green marker at a whiteboard. In the foreground, the back of a person's head with blonde hair is visible, looking towards the whiteboard. Another woman with curly hair is seated in the foreground, looking at the whiteboard. The whiteboard is titled 'TABLE 2' and contains handwritten notes. A projector screen in the background shows the number '8 m' in green.

Crafting a Message in Action!

Bring climate into political debate
Reasons for different sectors
↳ Why climate is important
Sharing success stories
Motivate parents
Cool companies → cultural competitiveness
Incentives
Expose

Building Your Own Narrative

BUILD RAPPORT

1. Start with people, stay with people
2. Connect on common values
3. Acknowledge ambivalence
4. Make it real

INSPIRE & EMPOWER

5. Emphasize solutions Start with people, stay with people
6. Inspire and empower
7. Focus on personal benefit
8. End with your “ask”
9. Sequence matters

STRENGTHEN

- Describe don't label
- One powerful fact from a trusted messenger
- Use reality effectively
- Use stories to strengthen
- Stay above the fray
- Message discipline is critical

1. Start with people, stay with people

- Show your audience you care about them
- Start from your audience's perspective
- Use tangible and relevant human concerns
- Move from people to climate



2. Connect on common values

- Understand your audience's priorities and concerns
- Common values are powerful motivators
- Build rapport



Summary – Common Values

1. Family
2. Health
3. Security
4. American ethos: We-can-do-itism, compassion
5. Personal rights to clean environment for all
6. Responsibility to do something about climate

Start with people, stay with people

Connect on common values



In Salt Lake City, we have an incredible history of self sufficiency from the time of settlement. We have cared about using our natural resources wisely, having **clean air** and **water**, and being **wise stewards** of our natural and financial resources. You and I can make the communities and quality of life we want for **today and future generations.**



3. Acknowledge ambivalence

- People have different levels of climate concern
- Respect different perspectives
- *“we have a variety of views regarding climate change in our community...”*

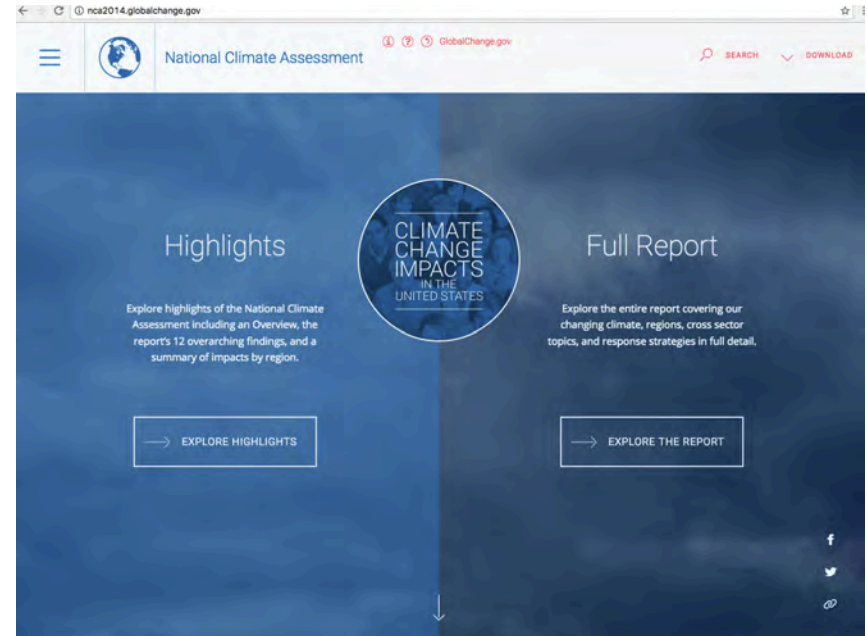
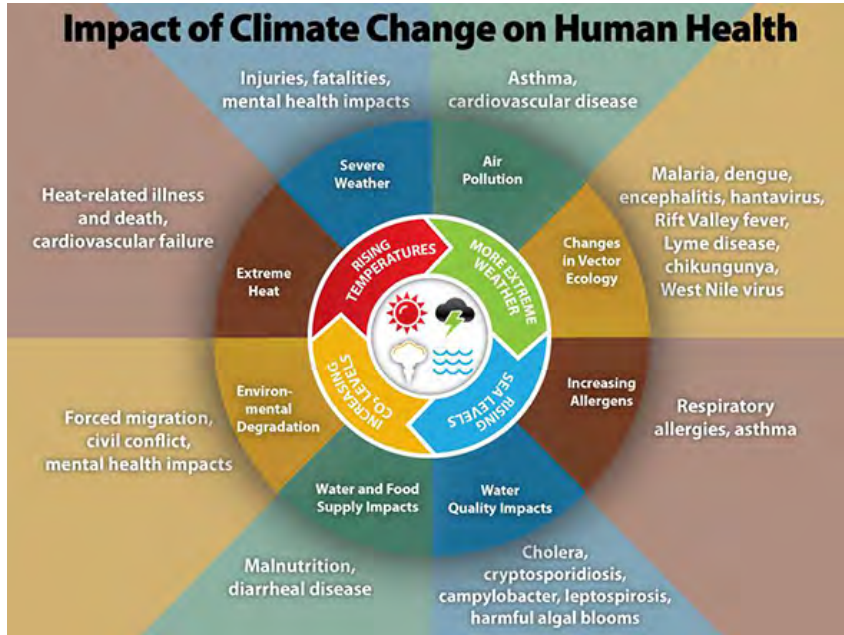


4. Make it real

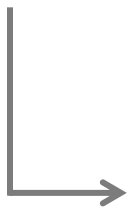
- Focus on local realities people can see and feel
- Assume the realities, don't argue the science
- Share stories of people know that have been affected by climate change
- Pivot quickly to solutions



4. Make it real



Acknowledge ambivalence



Some of us are more worried about damage to the climate in our community's success, than others. Regardless of your point of view on this topic...

In particular to our air quality, last year the **American Lung Association ranked Salt Lake City as the sixth worst air quality in the U.S.**

Make it real



5. Emphasize solutions

- Highlight the co-benefits of solutions
- Point to local solutions like efficient transportation and energy storage systems
- Avoid sacrifice



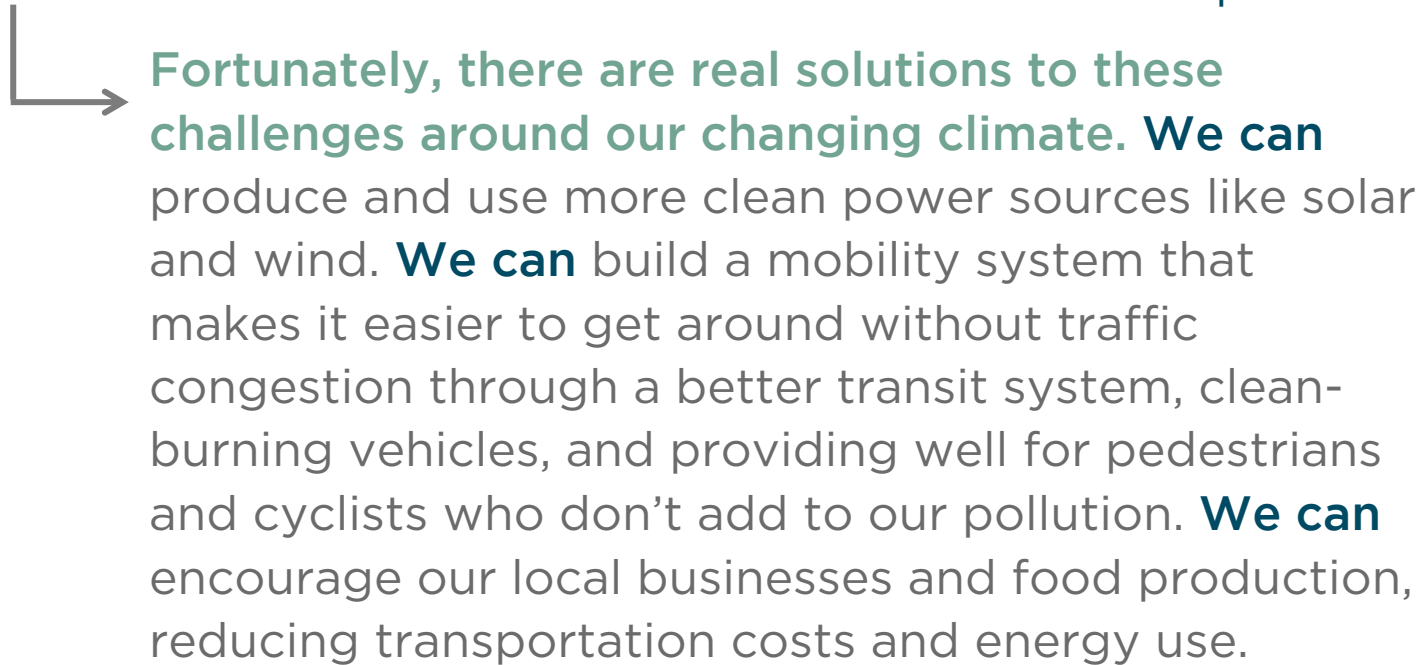
6. Inspire & empower

- Doom and gloom doesn't motivate
- Focus on hope and opportunity
- We can make a difference, action is accelerating
- Small actions contribute to solving the problem and inspire those around us



Emphasize solutions

Inspire and empower



→ **Fortunately, there are real solutions to these challenges around our changing climate. We can** produce and use more clean power sources like solar and wind. **We can** build a mobility system that makes it easier to get around without traffic congestion through a better transit system, clean-burning vehicles, and providing well for pedestrians and cyclists who don't add to our pollution. **We can** encourage our local businesses and food production, reducing transportation costs and energy use.

7. Focus on personal benefits

- Personal relevance
- Climate action doesn't come with a cost on lifestyle
- Always emphasize the co-benefits of solutions
- Emphasize how solutions advance values



Personal Benefits

Pocketbooks



Health



Community



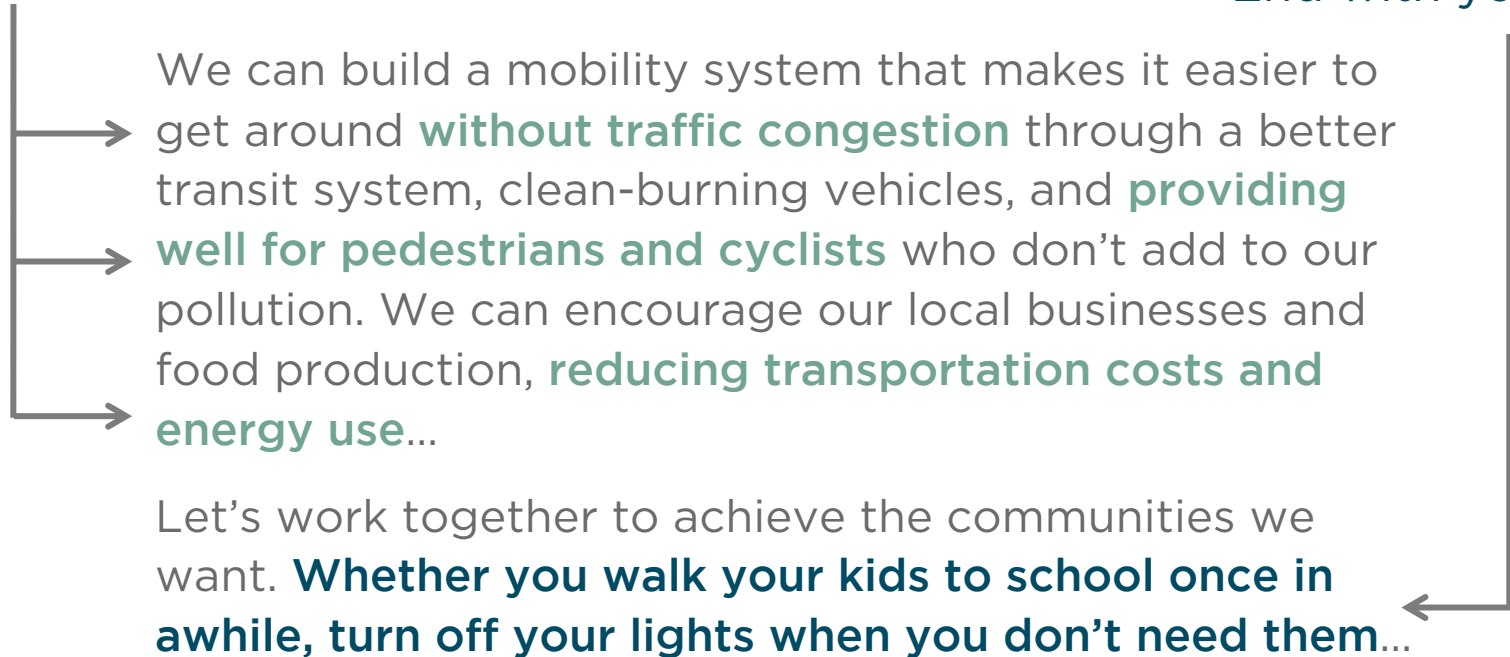
8. End with your ask

- Turn awareness into action
- Give examples that align with your audience's goals
- Make the ask accessible
- Provide one or two ideas



Focus on personal benefits

End with your ask



9. Sequence matters

1. Start with people, stay with people
2. Connect on common values
3. Acknowledge ambivalence
4. Make it real
5. Emphasize solutions
6. Inspire and empower
7. Focus on personal benefit
8. End with your “ask”
9. ***Sequence matters!***



10. Describe don't label



11. Trusted messenger



12. Ditch doom & gloom



13. Stories strengthen



14. Stay above the fray



15. Message discipline

Your Leadership Is Key



Building Your Own Narrative

BUILD RAPPORT

1. Start with people, stay with people
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4. Make it real

INSPIRE & EMPOWER

5. Emphasize solutions Start with people, stay with people
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STRENGTHEN

- Describe don't label
- One powerful fact from a trusted messenger
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- Message discipline is critical

Editing Exercise

Climate change is wreaking havoc on the planet and its species. Global mean temperatures are rising at an alarming rate. Forest, deserts, and wildlife are all being profoundly affected by large shifts in climate, according to a new report from the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Temperatures and sea levels are rising rapidly in the Arctic. This is causing aquatic habitat loss and putting more and more species at risk of extinction. In addition, coastal ecosystems are on the decline. Coastal zones are vulnerable to severe ocean acidification, rises in sea level and temperature, stronger storms, and coral reef bleaching. Invasive species that do not survive in cold waters are now adapting to temperature changes and competing with native species. Mangrove trees in Florida and snow crabs in Alaska are species that have already begun to decline because of climate change effects. According to activists, the future looks dire unless the world takes drastic and immediate action to regulate emissions from carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases.

Case Study

1

Topic

1. Green infrastructure, rec
2. Transportation, bike sharing
3. Sustainability
4. Sustainability + climate link
5. Climate vulnerability, preparedness
6. Clean energy/choice
7. Climate solutions

2

Audience

1. General public
2. Key constituencies
3. Colleagues
4. Elected officials

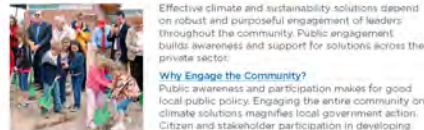
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Communications Piece

1. Public announcement (speech, mailer, etc.)
2. Internal memo/meeting
3. Presentation
4. Blog + social media piece
5. You're choice!

Case Study DISCUSSION

Moving Forward Action Toolkit



Effective climate and sustainability solutions depend on robust and purposeful engagement of leaders throughout the community. Public engagement builds awareness and support for solutions across the private sector.

Why Engage the Community?

Public awareness and participation makes for good local public policy. Engaging the entire community on climate solutions magnifies local government action. Citizen and stakeholder participation in developing sustainable policies can be a rewarding process that leads to gains in the design, participation, and outcomes of local programs. Good engagement is both a process and an outcome — a journey and a destination.

Who is Engaging Their Communities?

Leadership on climate solutions is coming from all walks of civic life, from elected leaders and governments to businesses, from faith leaders in every religious denomination to physicians and public health officials. This broad-based leadership has little to do with the science or politics of climate change, and everything to do with a growing sense that the problems are becoming acute and the time for broad and inclusive action has arrived. A hallmark of success occurs when local leaders grasp the urgent need for action and take it upon themselves to lead their community towards solutions. Examples of local leadership initiatives include:

The **National League of Cities** has taken an assertive stance in promoting resilience among its member communities. Since 2015, NLC has hosted annual Resilient Cities Summits including more than 50 communities, and also convenes a cohort of 7 to 10 communities for a year-long resilience in community

We Invite You To Join Us!



Path to Positive[™]
Communities
Local Climate Leadership

Follow Path to Positive for:

- Monthly topical/timely research
- Bi-monthly talking points
- Tools and resources to help you engage and act on climate
- Upcoming Climate Ambassadors program



Thank You!

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